COLOGNE, Germany, Nov 22: Hertha Berlin, despite playing out the final half hour with 10 men, handed Bayern Munich their second defeat of the season on Saturday to open up the Bundesliga title race, reports

Michael Preetz scored the only goal, in the 68th minute in front of 75,000 fans in Berlin's Olympic Stadium after Dutch defender Dick van Burik was sent off.

Meanwhile, second-placed Bayer Leverkusen destroyed VFL Bochum 5-1 and now have 29 points, just two behind Bayern who have a gave in hand.

The leaders, weakened by the absence of midfield playmaker Stefan Effenberg (back problems), also began without Brazilian striker Givoane El-

He came on as a late substitute after flying in at the lastminute following Brazil's midweek win over Russia.

Bayern began with Iranian international Ali Daei partnering Alexander Zickler in attack but the pair received no service

The jet-lagged Elber played the final half-hour but failed to shine. Mario Basler, who played for Germany in Wednesday's friendly with Holland, was also left on the bench for the opening hour.

Leverkusen fans began chanting "Bayern, we're coming" after watching their side thrash VFL Bochum.

The one blot was Leverkusen coach Christoph Daum's being sent to the stands after shouting at the referee.

Leverkusen face a potential table topping clash with Bayern Munich in three weeks time.

Marco Reich's 77th-minute goal, meanwhile, gave champions Kaisserslautern a 1-0 win over Bourssia Dortmund to keep his side fourth on 27 points, level with 1860 Munich who drew 0-0 with Hamburg.

"The way Hamburg played here today had nothing to do with Bundesliga football. They only had one shot," 1860 coach Werner Lorant complained.

Stuttgart coach Winfried Schafer's job prospects took another battering when lowly sa Rostock clung on for draw and their first away

point this season.

Stuttgart's fans chanted "Schafer out" after the game, a sentiment supported by some of the players at a club where infighting nas been prevalent for several seasons.

Wolfsburg kept up their recent run of form, following five consecutive victories with a 1-1 draw in Nuremberg. The home side suffered a blow when Czechs striker Pavel Kuka was taken to hospital with broken

On Friday Werder Bremen broke a seven-match winless streak with a 2-0 win at Eintracht Frankurt. Schalke also boosted their sagging confidence by defeating Duisburg 2-0.

#### Del Piero on way to USA

TURIN, Italy, Nov 22: Juventus star Alessandro Del Piero flies to the United States today for an operation on his left knee, his club announced here Friday, reports AFP.

The surgery on the 24-yearold Italian international is being carried out by a specialist at the Hawkins Clinic in Denver. Colorado which has already conducted operations on two other Italian players, Maurizio Ganz (AC Milan) and Nicola Berti (Inter Milan)

Del Piero, who was injured when colliding with a Udinese defender a fortnight ago, faces a six-month spell on the side-



Arsenal's Stephen Hughes (R) being intercepted by Robbie Earle of Wimbledon during their English Premiership encounter in London on November 21. Wimbledon won 1-0.

AP/UNB photo

## Fowler floors Vill



LONDON, Nov 22: A Robbie Fowler hattrick helped inflict a first league defeat of the season on

leaders Aston Villa on Saturday as Liverpool won a pulsating Premier league match 4-2 at Villa park, reports Reuters. The top three all lost as sec-

ond-placed Manchester United went down 3-1 at Sheffield Wednesday and third-placed Arsenal slipped 1-0 away to Wimbledon.

Those results allowed Chelsea and Leeds United to close ground, with a 4-2 success at Leicester City and a 4-1 victory over Charlton Athletic respectively.

Liverpool had won only once in their previous nine-league games but roared 2-0 ahead after seven minutes with headers by Paul Ince and Fowler.

There was end-to-end action and chances galore but no more goals until Dion Dublin pulled one back two minutes into the second half. Fowler restored the two-goal

his seventh goal in three games since joining Villa from Coventry City, to make it 3-2. Fowler struck again for 4-2 and Villa then had Stan Collymore sent off for a second book-

ing in the 68th minute. Dublin missed a chance for his second successive hattrick

in the world.

pras or Marcelo

Rios. It's come

down to the last

Championship that start Tues-

day.

The season-ending event

brings together the eight play-

ers with the best results during

the year and the list can differ

slightly from the current com-

puter rankings, which are based

on the results of the last 52

This is the first time since

1995 that the championship

has a bearing on the No 1 sea-

as David James brilliantly saved his penalty after the keeper had brought down Ju-

lian Joachim.

"It was a wonderful game and a great performance by my



ROBBIE FOWLER Gerard Houllier

Sheffield Wednesday had only one win in their last 10 games but a bad error by Peter Schmeichel, who let Niclas

Alexandersson's short slip through his hands, allowed them to go ahead after 14 min-

Andy Cole equalised but a second for Alexandersson and one by Wim Jonk gave Wednesday the points.

A 77th minute Efan Ekoku goal was enough for Wimbledon to beat Arsenal but a bigger worry for coach Arsene Wenger will be the injuries received by Patrick Viera and Dennis Bergkamp that makes both doubtful for Wednesday's European Champions' League game against RC Lens.

"We were not aggressive enough, they won more of the fights," said Wenger.

Southampton climbed off the bottom for the first time this season with a 2-0 win at Blakburn Rovers, the losers dropping to last place. Matt Oakley, after four minutes, and Steve Basham, a minute from time, earned Saints their first away win of the season.

Tottenham Hotspur beat 10man Nottingham Forest 2-0 and Middlesborough beat Coventry by the same score. There were 28 goals in the

day's eight games an average of 3.5 per match, which sould hoist their Premier league from last place in Europe's goals-pergame standings.

Derby County play West Ham United today and Everton face Newcastle United on Monday.

ROME, Nov 22: AS Roma squandered a chance to go two points clear at the top of Serie A when they were held 1-1 at home by mid-table Bari on Saturday, reports Reuters.

Zdenek Zeman's side needed late penalty from newly capped Italy striker Francesco Totti to salvage a point. It put them level with leaders Fiorentina who play Inter Milan on Sunday.

Bari had taken the lead through South African striker Phil Masinga, whose goals gave his side a stunning 3-2 win over Inter at the San Siro earlier this month.

Swedish forward Yksel Osmanovski broke down the left flank after 76 minutes. His cross eluded three Roma defenders before Masinga fired his shot past goalkeeper Antonio Chimentia.

Roma, who play FC Zurich in the UEFA Cup on Tuesday night, responded almost immediately Totti bursting into the penalty area to meet a cross from Brazilian defender Aldair.

Bari defender Rachid Ngrouz was deemed to have handled the ball before it reached Totti and the referee awarded a fiercely contested penalty which the Roma player duly converted.

Roma's fellow UEFA cup hopefuls Parma stumbled to a 1-0 defeat at Cagliari - their first loss in seven matches.

Sierra Leone striker Mohamed Kallon scored the decisive goal for the Sardinians in the 78th minute.

Midfielder Gianni Cavezzi created the goal with a superb through ball to Gaetano Vasari, Vasari crossed from the right and Kallon crashed the ball high into the roof of Gianluigi Buffon's net.

Bolonga, who take on Real Betis of Spain in the UEFA Cup. needed an equaliser from midfielder Jonathan Binotto to salvage a 1-1 draw at home to Perugia.

Perugia went ahead against the run of play through Croat Milan Rapajc. He slipped inside the Bolonga defence down the right touchline after 37 minutes and curled a left foot shot into the roof of the net from a tight

Binotto's reply five minutes later ensured Bologna stretched their unbeaten run to 14 matches.

### Hodgson parts with Rovers

BLACKBURN, England, Nov 22: Blackburn Rovers manager Roy Hodgson is stepping down with immediate effect, it was announced on Saturday, reports AFP.

The move comes after Rovers slumped to the foot of the English Premiership table following a 2-0 home defeat by fellow strugglers Southampton, who moved one place above them. Despite Hodgson, who

coached Switzerland to the 1994 World Cup finals and had a spell at Inter Milan, guiding Blackburn to sixth place last season and a EUFA Cup spot, this season has been a disaster

The 51-year-old, who only recently was suggested as a possible successor to England supremo Glenn Hoddle, has been the 1995 Premiership champions win only two of their 14 league games this season, the last on October 3.

#### British police probe booters' transfers

Internet): British police said on Saturday they were investigating the transfer of a number of Australian soccer players to Portsmouth Football Club while it was being run by former England manager Terry Venables.

Fraud squad detectives in the southern English county of Hampshire are examining alle-

but media reports said five Hamilton Thorpe from Western Adelaide, Craig Foster from Fairfield Marconi and Australian John Aloisi, who joined from the Italian club Cre-

Venables, who bought Portsmouth in 1996, has declined to comment. His spokesman said "He is not aware of any situation requiring any investigation in any

News of the Portsmouth inquiry follows the decision taken on Tuesday by English First Division club Crystal Palace, where Venables is now coach, to ask the Football Association to investigate a shortfall in the payment for the transfer of two Chinese internationals.

pounds (2.27 million dollars) in August for Fan Zhiyi and Sun Jihai. But the Chinese football association is reported to have received only 900,000 pounds.

#### Monterrey in Libertadores

RIO DE JANEIRO, Nov 22: (Reuters/Internet): Mexico's Monterrey qualified for next year's South American Libertadores Cup by beating Universidad de Los Andes of Venezuela

the qualifying group featuring two teams from Mexico, which takes part in the South American tournament by invitation. and two from Venezuela, the country with the worst record in the competition.

# Roma's missed | Rough night for big boys



Wregi Barjuan.

Real Madrid and Barcelona both suffered damaging defeats on a Saturday night of surprises in the Spanish First

Division, reports Reuters. European champions Real fell 3-1 at Valencia, with Argentine striker Claudio Lopez scoring twice, Barcelona went down I-0 to Mallorca through an unfortunate own goal from

With Celta Vigo also losing 2-0 at Alaves - and surrendering the last remaining unbeaten record in the process - Mallorca moved clear at the top with 22 points from 11 games.

Celta dropped to second, two points behind, with Barcelona third on 19 and Real Madrid fourth ahead of Valencia on goals scored.

Real's performance at Valencia was arguably their worst of the season as they were taken apart by the home side.

Miguel Angel Angulo put Valencia ahead on 34 minutes. capitalising on a mistake from German keeper Bodo Illgner, who spilled a long shot straight

And although Real came

back at the start of the second half. Savio turning home from close range after hesitation in the defence. Valencia took the points with two expertly taken

goals from Lopez. The Argentine smacked home his first after 62 minutes following a long ball out of defence, and then sealed the victory nine minutes later as he controlled a cross from the right and side-footed past Ill-

gner. Defeat for Real was their second in as many weeks and will increase the pressure on Guus Hiddink, who, like his fellow Dutchman Louis van Gaal at Barcelona, has been under

Van Gaal will put their Mallorca reverse down to a lack of fortune rather than any shortcomings in the side.

The Catalans were in charge until Sergi, attempting to cut out Lauren's cross from the left, succeeded only in diverting the ball past Ruud Hesp and into his own goal.

Mallorca then packed their defence - difficult enough to broach at the best of times and absorbed everything the likes of Rivaldo and Patrick Kluivert threw at them

Both strikers had chances but with the Brazilian looking tired after his midweek international excursion against Russia and Kluivert struggling to find his touch in front of

goal, Mallorca keeper Carlos Roa was rarely troubled. The best performance of the day came from Atletico Madrid, who eased the pressure on coach Arrigo Sacchi with a 6-1 demo-

lition of Valladolid. Sacchi's side, who started the day 10th, showed real character as they overcame a nervous start which saw Julio Cesar give Valladolid the lead in-

side the first two minutes. Atletico, struggling to find their passing rhythm in the absence of the suspended Juninho and injury victims Carlos Aguilera and Jordi Lardin. swept back into the game on 26 minutes through Argentineborn midfielder Oscar Mena.

Vladimir Jugovic gave Atletico the lead just before halftime and the second half became an exhibition game as Valladolid faded badly.

Atletico netted through Zoran Njegus — a piledriver from the edge of the area - Ferdinand Correa, Kiko Narvaez and Jose Mari to move sixth.



Barcelona's Brazilian superstar Rivaldo (C) coming under a challenge from Mallorca's Jovan Stankovic during their Spanish Premier league fixture at Mallorca on November 21. The - AFP photo locals won 1-0.

# No call for Collymore to be so rough



LONDON, Nov 22 (Reuters/ Internet): Aston Villa striker Stan Collymore has denied

his tackle which left Liverpool's Steve Harkness on crutches had anything to do with a rift between the two players last season.

## Feyenoord go three point clear

Dutch league leaders Feyenoord widened their advantage to three points with a convincing 4-0 win over lowly Cambuur Leeuwarden on Saturday, reports Reuters.

drew 1-1 at Graffschap Doet-Feyenoord had to wait for a

40th minute own goal by Peter de Roo to break the deadlock against Cambuur, but three minutes later Kukio Cruz added a second on a pass from Kees

85th minute and Peter van Vossen five minutes later. Twente Enschede hit five against Willem II Tilburg, who

dam play bottom side RKC Waalwijk away today, victory would put them within a point

footed lunge, but he was later sent off for a second booking after tangling with Michael Owen. Saturday's incident is the latest twist in a feud between the two players that started last

season when Collymore accused Harkness of making racist remarks to him. Villa won that match in

March 2-1 with Collymore scoring both goals against his old But the player claimed at the

time he had been subject to

racist abuse on the pitch for the entire match and in the players' tunnel afterwards. Harkness vehemently denied making racist comments and

countered Collymore by saying the striker had threatened to break his leg. The pair called an uneasy truce after meeting the Professional Footballers' Association

but soon afterwards threats of

legal action were bandied around But despite the history of bad blood between the two, Collymore has categorically denied that there was any grudge in-

volved in the tackle that injured Harkness on Saturday. "There was no malice whatsoever...no intent," he said.

"People will put whatever

spin they want on it but there

was no spite on my part."

Keegan spent while manager there and Kenny Dalglish's 38 million pounds (\$63.1 million). Sheffield's mixed

be ready to sell England striker

of Shearer as a way of raising

funds for a foray into the

with a kitty of just 7 million

pounds (\$11.6 million) to spend

-- compared with the 60 million

pounds (\$99.7 million) Kevin

The Dutchman sees the sale

Gullit is reportedly unhappy

Alan Shearer.

transfer market

fortune LONDON, Nov 22: Sheffield United won their English First Division encounter with Queen's Park Rangers on Saturday but lost assistant manager John Deehan, who was arrested and spent the second-half in a police station, reports AFP.

The 41-year-old Deehan, who had been warned to remain in his dug-out by a female police officer, was arrested for swearing and aggressive behaviour when Sheffield United player Petr Katchouro was sent off.

Sheffield manager Steve Bruce said: "I'm delighted with

the win but horrified that my assistant manager is down at the police station.

#### 11 "The Birdcage" actor 16 "Guess —?" 18 2 In the Red?20 Disposition hindrance 23 Winter driving hazard 5 Miss Piggy, 25 Constrictor 26 Have a bug I 27 Snowstorm description 31 Cacophony 32 "A Chorus 43 44 Line" song

38 Jagger's CRYPTOQUIP QRQCTTE XJGRBR VBDCTB DCGB? G Q FYesterday's Cryptoquip: I IMAGINE THAT ABSO-

LUTELY THE BEST SEASON TO BUY A TRAMPOLINE 48 "Birth of a IS SPRING. Today's Cryptoquip clue: D equals M 49 Collections letter stands for another. If you think that X equals O, it

The Cryptoquip is a substitution cipher in which one will equal O throughout the puzzle. Single letters, short words and words using an apostrophe give you clues to locating vowels. Solution is by trial and error.

## SIX NO TRUMPS A K Sayeedul Huq

SEE WHAT CAN BEAT THE CONTRACT!

(Hand # 135)

weeks.

North ♦ S : AK543 ♥ H: 105

West ♠ S: J1087 ♥ H: 876 ♦ D: AQ93 +C: KQ

East (D) ♦ D:4 ♠ S : Q 6 ♣ C: J8652 ♥ H: AKQ94 ♦ D: K10872 South ♠ S:92 ♥ H: J32 ♦ D: J65 + C: A9743

Bidding: East-West were vulnerable East West 1 Heart 3 Diamonds 2 No Trumps Pass Pass 4 Diamonds Pass Pass 3 Hearts Pass 4 Hearts Pass Pass

Pass East opened one Heart in response to which West showed values for game by bidding two No Trumps. South bid Diamond twice showing 5-5 distribution, but as West lacked first round control in both Spade and Club, he rightly settled for 4 Heart contract, though he had wonderful fit

#### THE PLAY

in Diamonds.

South opened the Nine of Hearts, but the declarer did not cover with Ten. This showed that East had the Queen. North won the trick with the King, East dropped the Queen. Could it be singleton? North, who was listening to the bidding very carefully, calculated that East had at least ten cards in Hearts and Diamonds and must have two cards have in Spades since partner would not have led the top card with broken threecard holding. If East had the Ace of Clubs the setting tricks must come from the trump suit. Partner might have three trumps unless the declarer had more than five. However, if partner had the Ace of Clubs, this must be cashed before a Spade ruff is given because, otherwise the losing Club will be slapped on the third Spade. Hence, North returned the Jack of Clubs. South took the Ace and played back the two of Spades, completing the echo. North won with the Ace and returned a Spade. Now, if East ruffed with the Queen, a trump trick gets promoted for South. A god defence by North which he got by hard work, i.e., careful calculation of the declarer's hand.

The Sampras-Rios show So, although he has been far HANOVER, Nov 22 son-ending ranking. Sampras, 27, should have a from dominant, Sampras has (AP): Pete Sammental edge over Rios, the ec- received some help from his ri-

ranking he has already held week of the season to determine during two brief spells this who will finish the year as No 1 But Rios, 22, is competing at In one of the closest finishes the exclusive event for the first in recent years, Sampras leads time, while Sampras has won it Rios by a mere 33 points going four times already and always into the ATP Tour World

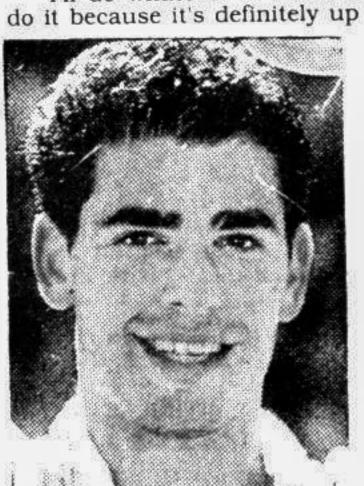
excels in the prestigious tournament. Sampras is also gunning for an unprecedented achievement finishing as No 1 in the world for six years in a row.

centric Chilean who can cap a

fine year by regaining the No 1

Sampras shares the record of five with fellow American Jimmy Connors. "It's a record that might not

ever be broken. It is that hard to do," Sampras said. "I'll do whatever it takes to



PETE SAMPRAS there with the greatest achievements in tennis," Sampras said last month at the

tournament in Stuttgart. Stuttgart was one of the six stops on the indoor European circuit for Sampras as he chased points in an attempt to pad his advantage over Rios. Never before had Sampras played six straight weeks in Eu-

Sampras won only one of the six tournaments, reflecting the mixed season he's had this year. He captured Wimbledon for the fifth time, but won no other Grand Slam and has four titles this year. Rios on the other hand cap-

tured a tour-high seven titles.

But the left-handed Chilean

also has lacked consistency in

the finish of the season. Injuries forced him to drop out of two European events (Sampras also withdrew from one) and he lost last week in the quarterfinals in Santiago. where a victory would have propelled him to No 1.

Every time Rios had a chance of overtaking Sampras in the last few weeks, Sampras managed to stay in a given tournament longer then the Chilean. No 3 Patrick Rafter, the twotime US Open champion, also

had a chance of seizing the top-

ranking but finally gave in the

injuries and will not compete in

Hanover.

eight players under the roundrobin format of the event. The top two from each group advance into the semifinals. If Sampras wins the 3.5 mil-

vals and goes into the champi-

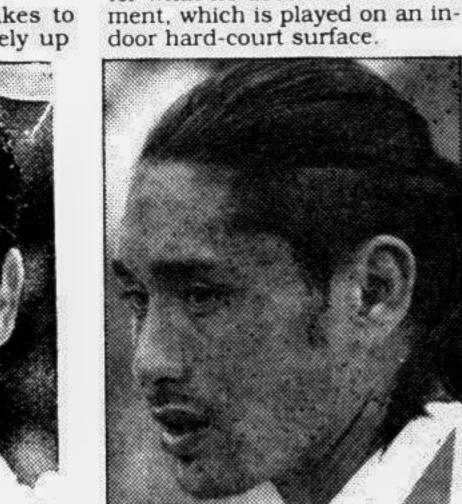
at the head of the two groups of

Sampras and Rios are seeded

onship ahead of Rios.

lion dollar championship, he will end as No 1. The same is true for Rios. There are other possibilities.

match than Sampras. If Rios fails to win at least two matches, Sampras will finish as the season's No 1 no matter what he does in the tourna-



MARCELO RIOS Sampras has complained about the lack of attention his achievements are getting back home.

year out, win Grand Slams and be No 1. I feel much more respected in Europe than I do in the States, from the press and from the people. "Americans expect me to win every match I play," said Sampras, who has won 11 Grand

"It is not easy to do year in,

Slam titles, one short of Roy Emerson's record. In addition to Sampras and Rios, the six others players in the event are: Andre Agassi, Carlos Moya, Alex Corretja, Karol Kucera, Tim Henman and Yevgeny Kafelnikov. Richard Krajicek qualified but also had

to pull out with a knee injury.

Iran might play

USA again TEHRAN, Nov 22: Reuters/I nternet): Iran's soccer federation is weighing an invitation to play friendly matches in the United States, a federation official said in remarks

published on Wednesday last.

"This proposal has been sent to us but we have to study it first ... We have not replied yet," the daily Zan quoted Nasser Noamouz, manager of Iran's national soccer team, as saying.

#### For Rios to finish No 1, he has to win at least two matches in Hanover- and win one more

LONDON, Nov 22; (Reuters/

gations of "bad business practice" involving the purchase of players last year. They declined to give details, players are believed to be involved. They include Robert Enes from Sydney United,

monesi. All four joined Portsmouth in 1997.

Palace paid 1.35 million

Monterrey finished top of

#### Harkness was carried off in Harkness said he had been the ninth minute of the premier advised not to comment. league match after former Liv-It is likely the FA will want to study video evidence of the erpool player Collymore's challenge left him with stretched incident and Collymore could face disciplinary action. knee ligaments. Meanwhile, Newcastle man-Referee Peter Jones only ager Ruud Gullit is reported to

# booked Collymore for the two-

AMSTERDAM, Nov 22:

Second-placed Heerenven

van Wonderen. The Rotterdam side doubled their tally through Cruz in the

replied once. Third-placed Ajax Amster-

of Feyenoord. CROSSWORD By Eugene Sheffer ACROSS 59 Opposite

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43 Money, in

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Amontil-

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Muppet 30 "-- not choose to 33 Spindletop 34 Out of jail 35 Stannum 36 "The Greatest"

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Yesterday's answer 38 Year-end

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king

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word

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52 Cauldron 53 Catalan